

This document is in regards to a FCC filing (CC Docket No. 90-571) made from an industry group favoring a TRS national outreach program.

In the filing mentioned above there's a petition before the Commission that involves consumer education about how to make TRS calls from payphones. The petition further explains that such an expanded outreach program should be administered by a neutral governmental body or agent of the government. The filing, in regards to the payphone proceeding, goes on to state that this should not be used as a vehicle for a true national outreach program. This issue should be included in all TRS outreach programs as well.

The issue of having a national outreach program has come before the Commission, and this issue is pending before the Commission.

The general public needs to be informed about the various TRS services (STS, HCO, VCO, TTY-to-VOICE, etc.) because, sometimes, the general public is not aware that these services are available to them. Even though some states do provide a TRS outreach program to educate their citizens of TRS, it is not enough because of states' budget cuts. The states can only do so much for educating their citizens of TRS.

It is vitally important that the general public know about TRS services as it would provide for a healthy society especially among people with disabilities that normally have difficulty with communicating via the telephone. The general public, especially people with disabilities, is the last to know what is available to them in terms of communicating over the telephone, which is part of everyday life. Telecommunication technologies such as STS, HCO, VCO, TTY-to-VOICE, etc. will make a difference in communicating via telephone to those who are not able to do such communicating.

I, Rebecca Ladew, therefore, support the issue of having a national outreach program. I am the Speech Disabled Representative on the Maryland Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay, and also represent Speech-to-Speech Relay users on the Consumer Advisory Committee at the Federal Communications Commission.

My speech disabled constituents are the hardest group to reach out to as they are very reluctant to come forward to identify themselves as a group as a whole. Therefore, a national outreach program would enable this group to come forward so improvements can be made to provide the necessary technologies for better communications via the telephone.

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